1: Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Saramacca

magic on their owners. And there was the Gankwe woman who brought us a paddle representing the bird she called the *apassa*.

"We Gankwe people do not eat the apassa," she had whispered to us when we bought the paddle.

5

In the house of the captain of Ma'lobbi we sat and talked of the carvings of the Saramacca people, and as we talked, they brought us some of the things the men of the village had carved.

"Do all men carve?" we asked the chief.

"Not everyone has the spirit. But every young man tries. If a man is good at hunting, or on the river, then perhaps he can get the things he needs to give his wife from others for what he can give the carver. But it is better that he do these things for his wife himself. The women like it better."

Not everyone could make a boat, he said, nor was everyone able to carve the *pau pau dindu*, the intricate "wood within wood" motifs that made a strip go like a twisted snake in and out, in and out, through a design. And not everyone could make a drum. Like that apinti he had there.

It was the opening for which we had been waiting.

We had been admiring this drum since we had come into his house, we said. We remembered it from the first time on our way up river. It was as fine as any we had seen. Had he made it himself?

He smiled his appreciation.

"It is a fine apinti, ai," agreed several of the men sitting about.

An apinti was one of the things we wanted to take to show the white man. This one, especially, we would like to buy. Would he sell it?

He looked at us for a moment, and then gently shook his head. "To make an apinti is not a small thing. Not everyone can make an apinti. I have worked on it for a long time, and it is not yet finished. This drum I will not sell."

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

755 the cock is able to stand up and crow the patient is said to be cured.

787 The killing of the white rooster and inspection of its bladder are performed also in order to foretell the future in other than healing situations. There are several methods of prophesying. In one of them a plank is supported on the heads of two men, and on it are placed various little bundles. A third man stands before the plank and asks questions while the men bearing the plank jump up and down. The Gadu (the spirit in the bundles) is supposed to reply with a yes or no, as indicated by the way the bundles on the plank move. The questions are put metaphorically and in such a way as to exclude the possibility of the plank bearers deliberately influencing the answers. After one man has asked several questions, the bearers run with the plank to another part of the village where further questions are put to it. The carrying of this plank seems to be the prerogative of certain individuals, and only certain others understand the making of the bundles and the correct placing of them.

[963]

778 Not even Mynheer Wolff, who has lived among the Bush Negroes for many years and undoubtedly commands their profound respect, has been permitted to enter Dahomey. The headman or captain of Dahomey, interestingly enough, is named Songai. There is a district on the West Coast of Africa still known today as Songhay. The name is the remnant of a great Negro empire that once flourished in North-West Africa, near the Sahara Desert. This empire is thought to have had universities and astronomical observatories, wealth

152 /241 cont./
828 Jealousy. To speak of jealousy as a negative magic force is
754 not to be false to the thought of the Refugee Blacks. They re-
777 gard it as an attenuated force of wisi, capable of bringing mis-
fortunes even if no sorcery has been formulated. Jealousy is
152 very marked in their character, associated with an individualism
157 verging on asocial tendencies. When somebody is accused of
754 wisi, jealousy is the commonest explanation of the crimes
152 attributed to him; it is thought for example that a man can be
828 jealous of his brother's growing rich to the point of making him
die; that a woman may be jealous of the beauty or health of
152 her sister's children. Not laying themselves open to jealousy
158 is the constant preoccupation of the Refugee Blacks; one ob-
828 serves it in daily behavior, for example in the greetings which
576 they exchange on the river. They never say, "I am well,"
but: "I feel only fair." If they come back from hunting they
say, "I found a little."

152 Examples are not lacking of people who avoid building
156 a fine house or buying an outboard motor in order not to give
828 cause for jealousy. This preoccupation has profound reper-
[182] cussions on the material life and the economy of the Refugee
[463] Blacks; it explains in particular the absence of specialized
professions and trade among them.

[183] Many aspects of the customary law of the Refugee Blacks
[571] have no other function than to exorcise, if one may say so,
tendencies toward jealousy and selfishness which, if they were
given free rein, would poison the life of the collectivity.

76 The rites of death and mourning, which we have shown
181 to constitute the pivot of the social life of the Refugee Blacks,
725 are entirely based on the idea of preserving the surviving spouse
828 from the effect of the jealousy of the deceased.

/291 cont./

159 464 463 Wishing to take advantage of all the possibilities which turn up, the Refugee Blacks are led to learn simultaneously the traditional techniques of their group, boating, boat-building, felling of trees, squaring of wood, and /building/ framework. In these techniques they may be considered specialized workers.

157 812 Proud of their strength and knowledge, sure of themselves, the Refugee Blacks are never worried about the future and consider life as an exciting adventure, ceaselessly bringing new things. If the past year has been bad, the new year will be better, with God's help. Nobody doubts that he will find gainful work again.

152 182 Influence of jealousy: absence of specialized professions and trade. Another strong psychological tendency having a direct influence on the economy is jealousy.

152 828 554 953 999 The effect of jealousy, and the fear of jealousy, is to limit enrichment and to maintain a de facto equality: it often happens that talented people forego undertaking profitable work in order not to give occasion for the jealousy which would render their position in the village difficult and might draw misfortunes upon them; for people have the idea that jealousy draws down illnesses and calamities upon him who is the object of it and on his near relatives, by the action of a natural force, even without sorcery being formulated.

754 556 441 829 Fear of sorcery interferes in the same way; one who becomes unusually rich is almost inevitably accused of being a sorcerer and may be obliged to leave the country. Particularly vulnerable are those, very rare, who engage in trade. People do not suspect of sorcery a man who is seen to become rich by /292/ working ceaselessly. But the trader whose wealth increases without his furnishing obvious work, is quickly regarded as a "committed one," accused of having his good luck as a result of a pact with the devil.

/292 cont./

754 552 441 438 366 In that can doubtless be seen the most likely explanation of the absence, in the tribes of Refugee Blacks, of any internal trade. There are not even markets in the villages. In practice only Creole and Asian traders are patronized.

463 829 [438] The repugnance which the Refugee Blacks have for trading with one another contributes toward preventing the development of specialized professions among them. Specialization does actually exist: one man is particularly good at building boats, another is a competent carpenter, still another devotes himself mainly to fishing; but the Refugee Blacks exercise these specialties with respect to other peoples and not with respect to one another. Nobody fails to build his own boat, his house, to cut his clearings himself. If it were otherwise, classes and castes would rapidly be created, and that is precisely what the moral law of the Refugee Blacks condemns. A special effect of this conception is to preserve family custom from deteriorating, by preventing the rich from becoming great polygamists maintaining idle mistresses. We have never heard it said that a richer man paid someone to perform for him the customary work he owes to his wives, clearings, house, boat. Whatever his wealth may be, he continues to do these jobs by the sweat of his brow, and that contributes toward maintaining in its meaning and value the tacit contract concluded between husband and wife.

463 829 593 182 461

182 159 433 648 Thus the geographic conditions, associated with influences of a social and psychological order, impose on the Refugee Blacks a unique economy, based on a symbiosis with the coast populations in the form of piece-work or temporary wage-earning.